

## FINANCIAL AND COMMERCIAL.

SATURDAY, April 23.

To-day in the stock market yesterday's recovering tendency in prices continued, although in a more or less restrained way, during the first hour of business. Then the market came practically to a halt until the last five minutes of the session, when prices again receded somewhat, leaving final quotations substantially unchanged from those of yesterday. The volume of transactions was small, either relatively or absolutely considered, and it may be truthfully said that there was substantially no market at all during the day. Neither was there any particular feature to the trading. Central Leather stock, in which dealings have been, comparatively speaking, larger than those in many other industrial shares, was again fairly active, and during the greater part of the day rather especial strength was perhaps shown by United States Steel, Brooklyn Rapid Transit and a few other stocks. The wheat market was dull but steady, and was kept firm seemingly by talk of the same kind as was heard yesterday of the development of harmful insect life in the Western grain fields. But it is obvious that there is no particular enthusiasm just now upon the buying side of grain speculation. The provision markets were, on the other hand, to-day distinctly easy. Sterling exchange rates remained the same. The bank statement was notable, as it often is, for the contrariety shown between the average and actual figures of the return. In the average statement a decrease of \$3,163,000 in loans and an increase of over \$2,000,000 in cash resulted in an increase in the bank surplus of \$4,055,000. The actual figures reported a decrease in loans of \$17,167,000, with an increase in cash of but \$2,927,000 left a decrease in the surplus reserve of \$2,581,000. The one phase of the current money situation that is of more interest than any other and which is unquestionably more illustrative of the true facts of the underlying situation is the high rates prevailing for New York exchange in the interior cities, which attests conclusively that the spring call of the West for funds has ended and that the general movement of funds instead of being against this centre is toward it.

Matters of news affecting stock market prices this week comprised such varied occurrences as an easier working of the money situation, a renewal of gold exports on a large scale, improved weather for the crops and a general fall in commodity values, the swinging over of another large Republican Congressional constituency to the Democratic side in a by-election, further decided progress made in the passage of the railway tax bill in Congress, more evidences of weakness in the pig iron market and of irregularity in the iron and steel trade as a whole and a whole host of developments bearing upon the cotton speculative situation. Another factor of great influence in the stock market, and perhaps one that was more weighty than any other, was the imminence of the time when the directors of the United States Steel Corporation will fix the rate of dividend distribution upon the corporation's common shares for the first quarter of the year just ended. All sorts of opinions prevailed in Wall Street as to the character of the action that the directors are likely to take, and the net result of these many and differing circumstances was to keep security prices in a rather narrow range. Through the week the general tendency of the stock market was downward, and yet there were few if any evidences that current quotations were made by any other than the buying and selling of stocks by a relatively small number of professional Stock Exchange operators. Looked at broadly and so far as matters originating in our own country were concerned, the one event of the week of greatest importance was the better crop prospect now afforded as the result of heavy recent rains over the agricultural section. Although at the close of the week a rallying movement in grain prices was underway, due chiefly no doubt to the fact that a large short interest in the staples had largely accumulated, the whole line of grain, provision and commodity markets is obviously tending to a lower level, and this had had and is having two favorable results, one the release of money that has been previously employed to carry grain and other staples held speculatively for the rise and the other a reduction in that high cost of living which has in the last year been generally recognized as the greatest adverse element in the country's entire business and financial situation.

The fall in the cost of living has so far of course been moderate, but if it continues for a considerable further time at the rate at which it has been going its favorable effect will be perceptible in the household accounts of every individual. There is very little doubt that to the unlocking of money previously tied up in large and small operations for the advance in grain credit is chiefly due the easier undertone shown in money rates which has controverted the expectations of those who had supposed that such large exports of gold as have lately been enforced would cause a tightening of money at this centre. The reorganization of the large dry goods firm of Tefft, Weller & Co announced on Friday was rightly considered by all well informed persons as being in no way indicative of the general trade position at the present time, even if the incident was undoubtedly caused to some extent by the current unsettlement in the cotton business. In the main, however, the prevailing impression seems to be that business as a whole over the country is not quite as brisk as it was earlier in the year, even if no positive indication of this is shown in the reports of railway earnings, bank clearings and the like. A development of international interest has of course been a subsidiary of the excited boom in rubber and oil shares that has for many weeks past been the feature of the London stock market. It has all along been said that the peculiarity of this movement has been the fact that buying of the stocks concerned represented cash investment transactions to a degree seldom if ever witnessed in similar operations, the reason therefore being that the English banks have in large measure declined to finance mere speculation in the shares. It will be surprising, nevertheless, if it is not proved by the event that after all credit has been extended more or less after the usual fashion in support of the rise, and fears of a collapse of the advance have admittedly figured prominently in the international financial considerations of the week.

NEW YORK STOCK EXCHANGE SALES, APRIL 23.

CLOSING PRICES OF UNITED STATES BONDS.

Bonds. Paid by Sub-Treasury to banks.

Interest. Paid by Sub-Treasury to banks.